

Applicant: Thomas Ludwig et al.  
Docket No. R.306457  
Preliminary Amdt.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-11. (Canceled)

12. (New) A fuel injection system for an internal combustion engine, the system comprising  
a high-pressure pump that delivers fuel at high pressure to an accumulator,  
a fuel supply pump that delivers fuel to the suction side of the high-pressure pump, a  
fuel metering unit connected between the fuel supply pump and the high-pressure pump and  
operable to variably adjust the fuel quantity taken in by the high-pressure pump,  
at least one injector connected to the accumulator for injecting fuel into the engine,  
a fuel return from the at least one injector, the fuel return from the at least one injector  
feeding into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit, and  
a connection controlled by a pressure valve leading from the fuel return to a discharge  
region,  
the high-pressure pump only drawing fuel from the fuel return in operating states in  
which the fuel quantity delivered by the fuel supply pump is less than the required intake  
quantity of the high-pressure pump.

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13. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the high-pressure pump draws from the fuel return only the difference between its required intake quantity and the fuel quantity delivered by the fuel supply pump.
14. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the branch-off point of the connection leading from the fuel return to the discharge region is disposed spaced apart from the outlet of the fuel return into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit, which spacing yields a fuel return segment between the outlet of the fuel return and the branch-off point of the connection leading to the discharge region.
15. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 13, wherein the branch-off point of the connection leading from the fuel return to the discharge region is disposed spaced apart from the outlet of the fuel return into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit, which spacing yields a fuel return segment between the outlet of the fuel return and the branch-off point of the connection leading to the discharge region.
16. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, further comprising a bypass line to a drive region of the high-pressure pump branches off from the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

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17. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 13, further comprising a bypass line to a drive region of the high-pressure pump branches off from the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.
18. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 14, further comprising a bypass line to a drive region of the high-pressure pump branches off from the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.
19. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 15, further comprising a bypass line to a drive region of the high-pressure pump branches off from the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.
20. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 16, wherein between the fuel metering unit and the branch-off point of the bypass connection, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.
21. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 17, wherein between the fuel metering unit and the branch-off point of the bypass connection, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

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22. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 18, wherein between the fuel metering unit and the branch-off point of the bypass connection, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

23. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 16, wherein between the fuel supply pump and the branch-off point of the bypass line, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

24. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 17, wherein between the fuel supply pump and the branch-off point of the bypass line, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

25. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 18, wherein between the fuel supply pump and the branch-off point of the bypass line, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

26. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the suction side of the fuel supply pump is preceded by a filter and/or the pressure side of the fuel supply pump is followed by a filter and, downstream of the filter, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

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27. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the suction side of the fuel supply pump is preceded by a filter and/or the pressure side of the fuel supply pump is followed by a filter and, upstream of the filter, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

28. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 14, wherein the suction side of the fuel supply pump is preceded by a filter and/or the pressure side of the fuel supply pump is followed by a filter and, upstream of the filter, the fuel return feeds into the connection between the fuel supply pump and the fuel metering unit.

29. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the fuel supply pump has an electric drive unit.

30. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the fuel supply pump is mechanically driven by the internal combustion engine or by the high-pressure pump.

31. **(New)** The fuel injection system according to claim 12, wherein the at least one injector has a pressure boosting unit disposed on it, from which the fuel return leads.